

What do you say about Christmas when you are in prison?

by John deVries

Unless a person has spent a Christmas in prison one cannot write about the experience and feelings of imprisonment on Christmas Day. The prisoner would be the first to tell us we did not understand if we did try to articulate or imagine his experiences and emotions in prison on Christmas Day - or any day for that matter. If we are going to get but a taste of what Christmas in prison may be like it is best we listen to the prisoner speak for himself.

The prisoners involved in worship services, Bible studies, and Christian action programs of the protestant chaplain in the Federal Training Centre (medium security) Laval, Que. were invited to reflect and to write down their thoughts on "Christmas in Prison". Over a week's time responses came to the chaplain's office; some were scribbled on scraps of paper while several came neatly typed on official size paper. Some were written in French and others in English. Several respondents did not complete grade school, while two people were well educated. Despite the differences in ideas, language, and experiences the responses are unified in that each is filled with feeling, and not one response lacks hope, however dim it may be. Here follows the responses of the prisoners:

"My Christmas in here was an unhappy one. I remembered all those wonderful Christmases I had on the outside. Little things come to mind; the trimming of the Christmas tree, the wrapping of presents, and going out to visit everyone. They were the happiest and I think much of them while in here where it is the saddest. Everyone here is mad and sad except for him who knows he will soon be leaving. If we wish to have it they give us a plastic tree with ornaments. They try to keep us busy with movies. We sit around the T.V. or talk about the good times we had on the outside.

"Sometimes I feel the world outside does not exist because there is no visit on Christmas Day. The Salvation Army gives us a goody bag as a present which somehow makes us remember that at least someone comes to see us on that day.

"Breakfast is the same; so is dinner, supper is turkey, a snack at night of chicken and chips.

"The saddest Christmas here is when someone takes his life by hanging himself. It really upsets everyone's Christmas morale, if they have any at the beginning of the day.

"I remember once when one of the guys gave me a Christmas gift; it was really a surprise. I also read over all my Christmas cards to make myself feel good that there are some people out there who took time out to send a card or just a letter. I get a lot of cards from people every year who don't write all year long."

A Newfoundlander

"The Day is a most sad day. However, this year I believe that

Christmas will be less sad because I have found a friend. He will carry me with his book, the Bible, which arrests me spiritually. There is so much spiritual enrichment and I am sure it will bring much comfort even here inside the walls.

"I invite all who read these lines outside the walls, to think of Him - especially when surrounded by presents - and not to make the error I made when I ignored Him.

"Think of Him. He will never forget me, even here. He can and does approach me now. I wish never to let Him go. This Xmas I am with Him. Praise God. Amen.

"Thank you for having read this. (translated)"

Grande Vermine

"For most people Christmas is a time for rejoicing and celebrating. It is a season for parties, lights, decorations, and the joy of giving and receiving.

"Well, last year, Christmas was none of those things for me because I was in prison. For me it was the worst feeling in the world. Not to be with my wife and my two sons was heart breaking, to say the least.

"It was hard to understand a staff member could be so cold as to refuse a phone call to a guy because he used the phone already that week. The extra pack of cigarettes or the bag of candy could hardly make up for not being with my family. The sadness could not be removed with an extra movie or an extra hour of watching T.V.

"If you ever think prison is not punishment, try spending Christmas there. The hardest of guys will shed a few tears."

Ken

"The day of Christmas in prison is a very sad and unhappy day. It is a day one must spend with his family. If the authorities would allow the prisoners to spend a Christmas with their family that would be much better than to spend Christmas in prison. (translated)"

Real

"To begin my story of Christmas in prison I report that I have spent Christmases in four different institutions. They were lonely, sad, and without happiness or joy in my heart. That is understandable. But today I have the certainty that I shall spend my ninth Christmas inside the walls knowing that my old scars have been healed.

"The 25th of December is a great day because it is the birth of Christ. It is joy for many. I do not really know how this day will pass for me this year. I have never spent a Christmas with Christ in my heart. It shall be an experience. I can say no more for the moment but I greatly look forward to that day, December 25, 1977. It gives me pleasure to wish everyone who thinks like me, a joyous Christmas. Glory be to Him. (translated)" C.B.

"I do not look forward to Christmas at all. I am already calling on a force deep inside me to overcome the predicted despondency that I know will be with me. Christmas, as long as I can remember, has been a special time for me and a time to find peace with those I love surrounding me. The spirit of Christmas has been instilled in me and I know it will prevail, in the sense of the true meaning of Christmas. As long as I can put aside, at least for a day or two, the hurt and anguish that is locked inside and keep this spirit in the forefront of my mind, then this day will pass as all those that came before and are yet to follow.

"Personally, I have treated my time here as one of two possibilities that could be reasoned for my being here, today. The first being a test of my faith in not only God but in my fellow men. Times have been shaky...and my faith is still strong and getting stronger as time rapidly advances.

"The other reason is perhaps a punishment for those things that I have done in my life that were never reproached before. Here too I can accept my fate and try to make amends for this. It came at a period of my life that is the hardest to understand, being on the threshold of happiness (marriage). It points out to me that we are all controlled by Him and that we should never take for granted any temporary lull in the little hurdles that life will throw at us. 'Where do I fit His master plan and where will it take me?'"

"God has seen fit to not only cause me to seek within me the courage to surmount the impossible odds that have borne false witness against me, but to find strength to come back and to even move the mountain that He has put on my shoulders. Whether or not I will succeed in only returning to the point I was previously, I don't know. If I will be able to and resist the pressures that will be put on me is a question that only He can answer and I will leave that to Him.

"So you see, John, (reader), there are a lot of unanswered questions and the passing of Christmas here will find

me asking Him for a sign that I can accept and will be in peace during that period we call Christmas.

"The people who have passed this road before will be in a better position to help you in finding an answer, I can only make a prediction and hope and pray for the best. My regards to you and yours." (signed) D.

"When I was in for Christmas I was really mad because I wanted to be home with my family. There, no one pushed me around or orders me what to do. This past Christmas in prison everyone was pushing me around and telling me what to do. That was the first time I ever spent Christmas in prison and I hope I don't have to spend any other Christmas in prison.

"This coming Christmas will be my second since my conversion to Jesus Christ. Before that I lived nine Christmases in detention. They were sad days. Much resentment and feelings of rebellion throbbed my heart. These other times Christmas signified superficial reflection about my pleasures. This was neither satisfying nor enriching.

"Since my rebirth Christmas has a totally different meaning. Last Christmas, my first Christmas in Christ, He filled my heart with a deep joy. For the first time Christmas meant joy, love, and my heart was filled with the knowledge of a place in the Kingdom of my Lord and Savior. Since I have accepted Jesus Christ as my personal Savior, I found interior peace and His love shown to us in his sacrifice for us. He has shown me what it means to love. I am no longer so jealous, resentful, and rebellious. Christ has changed my life. I have indeed seen a miracle. To God be the praise!

"I pray that our Lord shall permit us to live next Christmas in His Peace and His Joy. (translated)"

Bien Fraternellement dans le Seigneur
Rolland (signed)

Hate and love, resentment and resignation, despair and hope, suicides and visits, loneliness and the joy of Immanuel. All these shall be experienced in the sombre cells of prisoners on Christmas Day, 1977.

"Who cares?" asks the forgotten prisoner.

Some prisoners have found the interior peace of Christ despite their wretched physical condition. Other prisoners shall experience acute loneliness and may be thinking of taking their life. It happens.

One card, a letter, or a visit to any prisoner shall be infinitely more valuable than the many that are exchanged between friends and business associates. It may make the difference between life and death for a prisoner.

"Who cares?" asks the prisoner.
Chaplain John deVries Jr.
Centre federal de formation
Institution Montee St. Francois
Laval, Quebec

ViewPoint

They gave Him gold...

Each Christmas becomes a discovery, an adventure. You read through the familiar Christmas story but something different seems to strike you each time you read it. The story of Jesus' birth is so familiar yet various chapters of that story point out the magnificence of God's promise to His people.

Long before the Lord was born, a number of wise men from the east came to Jerusalem to look for their long promised king. The east country was known for its share of wise men. Solomon lived there generations ago. These men knew their Scriptures and recalled vividly the prophecies of Isaiah which foretold the coming of a king to free them from bondage.

Those men came in faith, following that star. And that star did not lead them to a royal palace full of traditional pomp and ceremony. You and I would have wondered, I'm sure: Being promised for generations that a special kind of king would be born who would be given gifts of gold and would save the chosen people from oppression... not physical oppression but spiritual oppression.

How would we have reacted, following that star for days and then coming to a shed in a little town where a seemingly poor young couple were holed up for the night with a little baby. Would we have laughed in disbelief? "This can't be the promised king. Surely we would find him in some palace but not in a shed for animals!" Seems logical, right?

Yet it says that when the men came into that shed, after that long journey, they saw the baby and Mary "and fell down and worshipped him". Simply amazing, the faith they had. And then they showered him with kingly gifts: gold, frankincense and myrrh. They didn't give him baby clothes or a few toys as we do at our modern-day showers. Gold was a gift for a king and

an ancient prophecy had mentioned that this baby should be offered the gold of Sheba, and that kings should bring Him the riches of the Gentiles.

The gold, to me, has a three-fold significance. It serves to show us the importance of Jesus' role at his birth. At last, the promised Messiah was born. The gift of gold was reserved for kings and was the best that this earthly world could offer to the Son of God.

It was also a gift in a practical sense. The gold was indeed a gift to Jesus Christ but it also served a very worthwhile service for the entire family. How useful this gold was to Joseph in the months following the birth. It helped him to defray the cost of the journey into Egypt and back. He was by no means a wealthy man when he took Mary to Bethlehem to be enumerated. The Heavenly Father knew what those financial needs would be and met them.

The gift of gold was the first offering of thankfulness for God's Gift to man — His Son. That offering was to be followed by many more for centuries to come. The wise men adorned that little baby with the finest gems that this world had to offer. Jesus' later ministry revealed that He did not merely want man's money but that He wanted his heart and soul.

Jesus Christ was born so that he could die for our sins. His life was an offering for our sake. Now our lives must be presented as gifts to Him. Just as the wise men from the east opened their treasures and presented Jesus gifts, so we must open up our lives of thankfulness to God and present our lives to Him.

The message of Christmas is beautiful. It is centuries-old, yet new again each year. It brings to life God's promise to Old Testament fathers, yet it applies to His children today; you and I and our children.

Keith Knight

by Keith Knight

NewsViews

Women voting in the church

The Canadian Reformed Church recently held its general synod in Coaldale, Alta. and looked at a number of issues of interest to all Reformed denominations. Reports of the deliberations have been appearing in the Canadian Reformed magazine, *Clarion* and the concluding report has not yet appeared.

The church meets as regional synods yearly and as a general synod every three years. Extensive discussions early in the deliberations centred around the right of women to vote in church matters. It was mentioned that synods in The Netherlands discussed that matter some 50 years ago and that it still remains unresolved.

The matter was dealt with by Synod 1974, meeting in Toronto, but could not come to a responsible decision. The church at Edmonton proposed formation of a committee to study the question of women's rights. There was no proposal to recognize that right, just to appoint a study committee which will advise the churches and synod of 1980. After much discussion and the warning "not to jump to a hasty decision", the committee's appointment was approved.

The synodical committees are also doing much work in revising its Book of Praise. Psalms and hymns will be included as well as the forms. Says the *Clarion*: "We have a report on the revision of the text of the Belgic Confession and of the Canons of Dort as they are found in our church book. By the way, the Canadian Reformed Churches have not yet adopted a definite English text of those forms. Strictly speaking, we are still bound to the Dutch text of our confessional forms."

Revision of our confessional forms are necessary from time to time. The

Canadian Reformed Church has been looking at its confessions and other forms for some time. They saw the need, for example, to change the marriage form to update its language. Much of it is archaic.

Discussions were also held in connection with the denomination's relationship with the Christian Reformed Church. At the last general synod in 1974, it was decided to "discontinue the contact with the Christian Reformed Church as until now was maintained by the Committee on Contact with the CRC."

The Edmonton church came to this synod with objections to that decision, arguing that it was made on insufficient grounds. A decision with respect to that contact with the Christian Reformed Church was not made until later in the sessions of synod. Results of that discussion will be reported in a subsequent article once synod's decision has been made public.

It is good to see that the matter of contact with a sister in the faith is being reconsidered. It is unfortunate when discussions across denominational boundaries are cut off in such a manner.

There are differences. That is why we have some seven Reformed denominations. Yet they are all part of the body of Christ and are one in Him. Even though synod has already acted at the time of this writing, it is hoped that it responded positively to Edmonton church's call to re-open the door to dialogue.

A concluding report on the deliberations of the Coaldale synod will appear in this spot within a couple of weeks. It is interesting to watch the organized church at work and to struggle with issues together and share uncertainties...together.

Growth in the Lord

by Dr. Jack Fennema

Churches: What is their responsibility towards the Christian School?

Who should establish, maintain, and direct a Christian school? Should the organized churches, thus making it a parochial school? Should the church as organism, the body of believers drawn from several churches and various denominations, thus making it a society-run school? Or should it be a parental school, one established, maintained, and directed solely by the parents of the children enrolled?

This is a difficult question, one for which Scripture has few explicit answers. In one sense, however, it is not a question of ultimate importance, since the issue of primary import is that of *some person, of some groups, or of some organization* actually establishing a Christian school. It is better to have a Christian school operated by, in our opinion, the "wrong" group of people, than to have no school at all!

It seems to me that the Christian school should be established, maintained, and directed by the church as organism, by the believers from various congregations who come together for the purpose of forming a school society or association and operating a Christian day school. One reason is that it is the most inclusive arrangement. Were the schools either parochial or parental, the other group would be excluded. A society-operated school involves, to some degree, both groups.

A second reason for promoting this viewpoint is that the task of the organized church is essentially ecclesiastical — preaching the Word, administering the sacraments, maintaining biblical discipline — rather than educational. The issue of day school education should be dealt with by the organized church in the same manner that it deals with political, labour, and farmers' organization. Finally a parentally-operated school tends to deny the importance of the concept of the body of believers as described in I Corinthians 12. Granted, it is true that parents are mandated in Scripture to provide nurture-in-the-Lord for their children and thus have the responsibility to send their children to a Christ-centred day school.

But the responsibility of the broader Christian community,

on the other hand, is to make certain that there is such a Christian school to which to send the children.

What, then, should the organized church do in regards to the Christian school? Briefly stated, it is to *encourage* its members to *establish* and *maintain* a Christian school, and it is to *urge* its members to send their children to such a school.

The organized church can often be a prime force behind the establishment of a Christian school within a community. The minister, especially, with the influence and respect which accompanies his office and place within the community, should be a key leader in this effort. He should feel free to call and to chair meetings for such purposes. He should take initiative in contacting other ministers, within his own as well as other denominations, for the purpose of arousing interest in and developing a sense of need for a Christian school. The church can also seriously consider offering its facilities for use as a school, either permanently or temporarily. This should be viewed as a ministry to the Christian community and thus could be done at cost or less than cost. Such a use of available facilities not only serves to encourage but it also promotes the concept of proper stewardship of resources.

The organized church is also to assist in the maintaining of "good" Christian schools. The Lord wants nothing less than the best, both spiritually and academically, for his children. Unfortunately, too many Christian schools fall short of one or both of these goals. One reason many Christian schools suffer academically is because of the lack of adequate funds to bring class size down to a teachable number and to purchase the up-to-date materials necessary for meeting the needs of a varied curriculum and of a varied student body. Churches should make certain, through generous giving, that the local Christian school has the resources necessary to provide an excellent academic program.

Yes, the organized church has definite responsibilities towards the local Christian school — responsibilities which should be viewed both as obligations and opportunities.

LETTERS

History of pope's role

Dear Sir:

When reading Calvinist Contact, (July 22) and The Banner, (August 26) I saw the articles by Paul Schrotenboer about "May We Pray for the Pope", and "A Visit With the Pope". When reading these articles, along with an article by Everett Huizinga, "Visits to Cairo and Rome", I was both surprised and disturbed. Especially so, after I had read Revelation 17:4-9, 18, and 2 Thessalonians 2, about Babylon the great, mother of harlots, and the "man of sin".

Throughout history the Pope has been identified as the antichrist. Take for instance the Woldensesin 1120 A.D. Also Joachim Abbas, 1183, who declared the antichrist to be the papacy. He also said that the harlot city reigning over the king of the earth undoubtedly meant Rome. Wycliffe, 1380, (Commentary on the Apocalypse) also declared that the papacy was the antichrist of scripture. Others believing the Catholic church to be the antichrist were: Luther, 1522, Zwingli, 1524, John Calvin, 1536, Melancthon, 1543, Wm. Tyndale, 1550, John Knox, 1558, Brightman, 1644, and in this century, Albert Close, 1917 ("Antichrist and His Ten Kingdoms"), F. Walker, 1942 ("Watchman What of the Night"), and E. Richards, 1975 ("Prophecy", the magazine of the Seventh Day Adventists).

These all point to the papacy as the antichrist and the Pope as the head of the apostacy. The line of popes is a line of men of sin, the "man of sin" being the one reigning at any one given point in history. When Christ returns,

the "man of sin" will be the currently reigning Pope. The Roman Catholic system claims absolute religious supremacy. Tetzels is quoted as saying, "The Lord our God no longer reigns. He has resigned all power to the Pope." Pope Pius X says, "The pope is not only the representative of Jesus Christ, but he is Jesus Christ himself hidden under the veil of the flesh." Boniface VIII in 1249 declared that "it is essential for the salvation of every human being that he be subject to the Roman Catholic Pope." Pope Pius XII is quoted as saying: "The Pope in Rome is the only one authorized to act and teach for God." When a new Pope is crowned with the "tiara", the following words accompany the act: "Receive this tiara ornamented with three crowns and know that thou art the Father of Princes and Kings, ruler of the world, and vicar of Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom be honour and glory, world without end." The triple crown proclaims power over heaven, earth and purgatory. The Pope is called, "Our Lord God the Pope"! Into the fold of Jesus Christ no one can enter if not under the guidance of the Sovereign Pontiff; men can securely reach salvation only when they are united with him, since the Roman Pontiff is the Vicar of Christ and represents his person on this earth (Pope John XXIII, 1958). F. Lucii Ferraris says, "The Pope is so great a dignity, and so exalted, that he is not a mere man, but, as it were, God, and the vicar of God... The Pope is, as it were, God on earth... Chief King of kings having a plenitude of power."

This church of antichrist is

called by Everett Huizinga the "Mother church". He said that generations ago she gave birth to his own church, etc. The focal point of the Roman Catholic Church is certainly the Basilica of St. Peter, (The Banner, July 15, 1977, "Visit to Rome" p. 6) St. Peter's Basilica is regarded by 659 million Roman Catholics as the temple of God, as Christ's seat in the visible church. Picart, regarded as an authority on Roman Catholic ceremony, described the adoration of the Pope with the following statement, "He (the pope) presides in the Temple of the Lord; this he does, when, gorgeously arrayed, he is carried on the shoulders of his cardinals to the papal chair. From this chair only, in this temple only, from this Cathedral only can the Pope make his ex cathedra, "infallible" pronouncements."

"May We Pray for the Pope? (C.C. July 22) What is Dr. Schrotenboer asking? He may just as well ask, "May We Pray for the Antichrist?!" Mr. Schrotenboer, the Catholic Church will not change, but her Protestant daughters will. The mother church will not go to her daughters; she calls her daughters! Read the C.C. first column of the front page. We read in the Banner of August 26, 1977, p. 20, "And her daughters came." After you read the foregoing, go to Revelation chapter 17, verse 5. See also Revelation 18, the whole chapter. Note the last verse.

The power of the Catholic hierarchy is well illustrated in these quotations on seminary instructions from an ex-priest: "Subconsciously we were living not in the age of presidents and politicians, of la-

bour unions and capitalists, but in the age of masters and slaves, of kings and serfs, of popes, representing God, and the faithful, who meekly acquiesced to their decisions as coming from the throne of God himself. The vow of obedience is the most important. It identifies all ecclesiastical superiors with the Church, and identifies the Roman Catholic Church with God. Every command by the superior of a religious community or by a church pastor, no matter how petulant, how ill-advised, or how unjust, must be considered as a command from God Himself and must be obeyed as such under the penalty of sin."

To summarize Revelation 17: "A whorish woman" — an unfaithful religious system; title: "Mother of harlots" — a mother church claiming offspring; "dominating many waters" — universal influence; "the paramour of kings" — political powers: "drenched in colour and gold" — astonishing wealth; "drunken with blood" — noted for persecution. The false theory concerning Antichrist will cause the nations of the world to resist Christ when he returns and actually accomplishes that which many people today are teaching that Antichrist will do. Are you one of them? May we pray for the Pope?!

"Shall we behold the promised land....

Shall we with pure and strengthened voice Join in that saintly choir to sing,

Shall we be with him in that day?

We make the answer Now!"

John Booy,
Delta, B.C.

Ministers favor dancing?

Dear Sir:

On the front page of Calvinist Contact (June 30) appeared an article which has upset not only myself but a lot of people of the Christian Reformed Church. "Calvin College board to allow social dancing in a Christian manner".

In the first place this article should never have appeared on the front page, because it is a shame that a christian college dares to allow dancing. Yes, they even use the word "Christian" in connection with dancing. If we read Romans 12:1 and 2 it is very clear that dancing is against the Holy Word of God.

Let us not kid ourselves. If you ever have seen dancing we all know how some persons can cling to each other. Even non-christians admit that dancing is a sexual stimulant and a start for a lot of trouble, broken marriages, divorce and so on. More and more people from our church are willing to sacrifice things that are holy to us and be on equal foot with the people of the world.

There is no difference between dancing and christian dancing as the board of Calvin College wants us to believe. If you listen to the records they use for dancing you will know what I mean.

What also disappointed me very much is that our ministers did not even take time to write to C.C. for comments. Are they in favor of dancing too? I certainly hope not. Or are they afraid they might step on some toes.

Everything we do we have to do to the honor and glory of God's name and I can not see that dancing has God's approval.

Mrs. Mary Vanwyngaarden,
St. Ann's, Ont.

Church leadership needs wisdom

Dear Sir:

In his letter (Nov. 11), Mr. B. Haverkamp expresses his concern about discipline in our church.

And though we have to be very careful in criticizing our rulers, we still have the duty to examine their decisions, especially when they concern the teaching of the Word of God. As is the case in the matter in Clinton church.

I read in the 1977 Acts of Synod that Classis Huron, by its decision, has stated that a common-law relationship does not necessarily exclude communicant membership in the CRC. Too bad, no grounds for this statement are given whatsoever. So it is possible, that a member in our church may partake in Holy Supper, go home and continue such a relationship.

And Synod concurs with this

statement according to grounds 1 and 3 on which the appeal of the 5 Clinton members is rejected. Both grounds are actually one.

In ground one it says that the lady involved would have to break up her family or forego membership in the church. In both cases she would be disobedient to the Lord. Can you really call such a relationship a family? My conclusion: To discontinue a common law relationship, when children are involved, is sin.

In Ezra 10 we read that the Lord did not make any exception when He commanded the men of Israel, priests included, who had taken non-Jewish women, to separate from them. And some had children. And these people were married!

And according to Classis Huron, (and Synod gave its ap-

proval,) every case has to be considered on his own merits. My dictionary defines merits as "essential circumstances". And what is essential in this case? Only adultery. Just read what Jesus says in Matthew 5:32. I feel that the greatest concern of the 5 applicants is not the result of the Classis' decision, being a precedent, but far more misinterpretation of Scripture, or rather not interpreting Scripture at all.

Reason for concern? Very much indeed. Our officebearers are called to lead the Church of Christ, His Bride, according to His Word. This Word only is decisive, not circumstances.

May the Lord give wisdom, to keep His Church from going astray, in obedience to His Word, that she may be holy like He is Holy.

A. Norg
Jarvis, Ont.

Family emphasized during week

Dear Sir:

Montreal was visited by Mr. John Struik, who is community consultant for Salem.

Sunday, Nov. 20, our Family Emphasis Week began. And what a week it has been! For many of us, it was an experience we never had before. Every night there was a meeting. First the consistory met with Mr. Struik. After that there were meetings for young people, catechism classes, Ladies Bible group, congregational meeting, Mr. and Mrs. night.

In the daytime, Mr. Struik was busy, dealing with individuals. I am sure that when he left, he was exhausted, but worthwhile for us to have had him here. Many of us who came to the meetings have learned an awful lot. For instance, loving and caring for each other, working together, to support, to listen, to trust,

to be open and sincere, to be honest, and to share. It has helped me personally and my family. I like to express my deep appreciation with many of our congregation for the work and the willingness Mr. Struik has guided us this week. Also to Salem for making this all possible, since Montreal is isolated, and because of this fact, I feel we need this kind of counselling more than anything.

We all subscribe to our creeds and confessions, as Mr. Struik said, but it is lived so little. A plant is known by its fruits. As Christians we fall short every time. We have to be doers, and that is so often neglected. I pray that this service of Salem may richly be blessed and that we all may be equipped to serve our Lord and each other in a better way.

Ymkjen Dykstra
Pointe Claire, Quebec

Church Page

Rev. John Van Harmelen, 550 Leister St., Woodstock, Ont. N4S 2R1.

Salvation through Allah in Bangladesh

Ramzan in Bangladesh, a Moslem holy month, offered yet another new and interesting experience to David and Nancy Van Der Puy, CRWRC staff in Bangladesh.

During Ramzan, Nancy reports, every devout Moslem is supposed to fast from sunrise to sunset. Fasting is one of the pillars of the Moslem faith, and is required for a good Moslem to enter heaven. There are few who observe the fast strictly, Nancy says. While the Christian believes he can be assured of his salvation, and does good works out of gratitude to God, Moslems must work their way to heaven and can never be sure whether Allah will be pleased and allow them into heaven or whether Allah will find they have not done enough and send them to hell.

For CRWRC staff in Bangla-

desh, this creates a problem in witnessing because the Moslems cannot believe Christians can be assured of going to heaven when they fail to observe the rites and ceremonies Allah requires. They can't conceive of a religion that is so "easy."

Following Ramzan, a two-day celebration of great feasting and rejoicing takes place. On the morning of the first day, all Moslem men gather at one of various prayer fields around the city — large areas enclosed by white cement fences with platforms facing Mecca. There, for one-half hour, they pray and listen to the Koran being read. It is a sad, but impressive, sight — thousands of men in white clothes and white toopee (hat for prayer) standing and bowing to the ground. The rest of the day is a feast day.

A month later, another feast day is held to celebrate and remember the new sacrifice of Ishmael (not Isaac) by Abraham, and Allah's intervention in providing a sheep. On this day, thousands of goats and cows are killed and eaten in remembrance, and meat is given to friends and to the poor.

Working and witnessing in a Moslem culture is an exciting and trying experience. "Sometimes the people try our patience," Nancy admits, "because of the cultural differences, but you won't find more hospitable and friendly people anywhere. We pray daily that we can help these people live more comfortably and, most important, that some will understand and accept the very thing that drew us here — the love of Jesus Christ."

Calgary

A church school or a parental school?

Some months ago I went to a rather interesting meeting at First Alliance Church. They had brought in the principal of the Peoples Church Christian School in Toronto. Peoples Church is a large Evangelical Church, well-known throughout Canada for its mission support. Their faith-promise commitment for foreign missions is well over a million dollars this year. But that's not all.

About five years ago the church began a Christian School which now has about 800 students. The principal, Dr. Edmundson came to Calgary upon the invitation of the Alliance churches since their leaders and members are becoming more convinced about the value of Christian Education. His visit to Calgary aimed to inspire the Alliance

people to start a Christian School for Christians from various denominations, but controlled by the church board.

I noticed that their aim in education is similar to ours; to view all of life from the Bible perspective. The ever increasing confusion in areas of values and morals is leading more Christians to opt out for alternatives.

Both, Rev. McColley and I pleaded that they work with the present Christian School. Besides financial advantages, I believe it to be much better if evangelical Christians could present a substantial, unified alternative rather than popping up with various small Christian schools. (I understand that also in the NW a church is planning a Christian School.) It will demand from

us a spirit of graciousness and even change in areas of cultural mores, it's hard for some of us to let go certain habits! Since we are experienced in this field, we may well make ourselves available to provide assistance and help to others who are now beginning.

God be praised. A good vision and cause is growing. May He continue to use us also in this area. H. Wildeboer

Church News

CHRISTIAN REFORMED

Called

-to Goderich, Ont., Rev. Peter Kranenberg of Strathroy (East), Ont.

Declined

-to Toronto (Second), Ont., Rev. Stuart Pastine of Lynnwood, Wash.

-to Wyoming, Ont., Rev. Gerald Vanden Berg of Manhattan, Mon.
-to Burlington, Ont., Rev. Jacob Uitvlugt of Wyoming (Beverly), Mich.

New Clerk

Goderich, Ont.—Cecil Bruinsma, R.R. #4, Goderich, Ont. N7A 3Y1.

CANADIAN REFORMED

Declined

-to Edmonton, Alta., Rev. C. Stam of Burlington (West), Ont.

Goderich church formed

The Clinton Christian Reformed Church since its institution on November 20, 1949 has had many years of growth, and has experienced the formation of 4 churches from within its ranks. Lucknow, Listowel, Exeter and Blyth Christian Reformed Churches were all formed from members who at one time or another attended the Clinton church.

On October 18, 1977 another new church was born, the Goderich Christian Reformed Church. On that day a special organizational meeting was held in the Goderich Robertson School Auditorium, when 33 families and 5

single confessing members had their memberships transferred from Clinton to form the new church in Goderich. Led by Rev. A. van de Berg and a special committee from the Clinton consistory, election of office bearers was held and 4 Elders and 3 Deacons were installed to form the new consistory.

On November 20, 1977 a special worship service was held with guests from neighbouring churches and town council. Rev. A. van de Berg conducted the service and spoke on the theme "An open door" as he introduced the church to the community. And so a new church is born.

The Lord and King of the church continues to build his kingdom. As members of this new church may we grow in faith, be a witness of that faith in daily living, and may we spread the good news of the gospel in the community in which we have been established. May God help us to be a true church to His Honor and Glory.

Cecil Bruinsma (clerk)

Christian Stewardship Services executive director, Harry Houtman, plans to be in British Columbia for two weeks from January 23 to February 3. If anyone would like to discuss with him the making of a will, estate planning, annuities, etc. that may benefit a charitable organization, please contact him immediately and he will try to schedule a private, confidential visit with you. CSS, 455 Spadina Ave., #210, Toronto, Ontario, M5S 2G8. 1(416) 598-2181, evening-1(416)461-1207. U mag ook in het Nederlands Schrijven of bellen.

SUPPORT NEEDED!

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Please send your inquiries and/or gift to:

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(416) 979-2443

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Ballast

by Rev. Hans Uittenbosch

The m.v. GONDOLA is a rather unusual vessel, not so much in looks as in design. It is a small vessel equipped with an exceptionally strong loading beam to take on heavy equipment without the help of shore-based loading-cranes. The m.v. Gondola can, for example, take on a dozen huge locomotives and deliver them to small unequipped African ports.

I am not thoroughly conversant with all the technical aspects of ships but the m.v. Gondola always intrigued me. Perhaps because she is so small and invariably takes on such huge loads. They told me that the engineering department on this ship always has to be on stand-by when the ship is loading. The reason is quite simple. The ship has some very large ballast-tanks which are filled with water whenever she sails without cargo. Without those ballast tanks she wouldn't stay upright in the water. But these tanks must be pumped empty as the ship takes on cargo. That is a rather delicate operation since that ballast-water must be pumped out in such manner that as her beam with a 45,000 pound locomotive hanging on it slowly moves from shore to shipside, the gently tilting ship does not suddenly flip on her side because of a shift of weight.

So, more power to those engineers monitoring the pumps. Although I had been on the m.v. Gondola on different occasions in the past, every time again it is a new experience when you board a vessel. Who will be on it this time? Will I know most of them? Will the atmosphere have changed since the last time she was here?

The atmosphere on the m.v. Gondola was good. I could sense it the moment I stepped on board. The young bearded chief engineer, an acquaintance of years gave his customary bear-hug and ushered me to the cabin of the chief officer which functioned as the gathering place for the entire composition of officers. Although it was only 10 in the morning, the cabin was already filled with people, a few of them pressed together on the couch, some seated in the available chairs, some on the floor, the 24-year-old captain, in the middle next to the stationary centre table on his knees, a position which I felt was in need of a compliment.

As all of them rose to their feet to shake hands I noticed that there were also two ladies present. The wife of the captain and the wife of the chief officer.

Point blank, after I had introduced

myself, the captain's wife said: "Tell me, what is the purpose of your visit on board these ships. I mean to say, does it have any effect at all, to speak to the people on board. After all, most of us here are not religious. I don't think anyone ever goes to church anymore. So what is the purpose of your visit."

I recalled that only once before did I run into a similar vein of questioning. I had spent a morning on board a cattle-ship and was subsequently invited for lunch. As is my tradition and arrangement with our Lord, I asked for a moment's silence to say my prayers before the meal. I say the prayers quietly unless I am asked to speak out loud. After all one must respect those who do not pray. Perhaps we should take over for them, as we pray.

Little did I expect after these few minutes of silence that the master of the ship would come out with the rather blunt question: "Padre, what did you pray?" When I responded that I offered prayer for all those with me at the table, the steward who brought in the food, the cook in the galley, the entire compliment of the crew for safety, their family, and mine, and that I offered thanks for food and drink as well as the health to enjoy it, the master seemed quite surprised but also intrigued, so he said: "Would you be kind enough to pray that prayer again, but now out loud please, so we are all able to be in on it."

On the m.v. Gondola a similar kind of frankness seemed to be present. So the question concerning the purpose of my visit became a challenge. "I suspect you came here to convert us", the captain said with a broad smile obviously enjoying the idea that I was placed in a position to defend myself, and my purpose of visiting.

"To be quite honest, I do hope that whatever happens, I won't convert any of you", I started out. "I'll tell you why. I heard an excellent story about one of the world's greatest preachers, Dwight L. Moody, who after an evangelistic service in London once walked the streets downtown and found a small group of people standing around a man who was lying in the gutter half-drunken. As Moody bent over to take a closer look, the man in the gutter suddenly recognized the world-famous preacher and said, 'Aren't you Mr. Moody?' and upon receiving an affirmative answer he went on and said, 'Sure, I recognize you, only two nights ago I was in one of your evangelistic services where you converted me.' 'I can see that,' Mr. Moody replied, 'because if the Lord God had converted you, you wouldn't

have been lying in this gutter tonight.' So I am certain we won't get very far if I should start converting any of you."

"Fact is though that you seem to be suggesting that changes have to take place, if I am to take that word conversion in a basic sense. And if changes have to take place then obviously the 'status quo' is not as it should be. So I come on board to ask how things are. You didn't even give me a chance to get to that point."

The second engineer, sitting with his back against the wall on the floor was moved to lift his glass and announce that he was prepared to drink to the last remark. I told him that in the Scriptures there are references



Rev. Hans Uittenbosch

to a similar type of reaction, except the Scriptures do not speak of a 'drinking to', but of an 'eating of' remarks that are made. As he was totally unfamiliar with the contents of the Scriptures I thereupon made an attempt to explain Jeremiah 15:16 and Ezekiel 2:8 which say something to the effect that 'Thy Words were found and I did eat them' indicating that the Word of God has to become a part of us.

Most people, who are unfamiliar with the Scriptures, seem to think that they are wholly unintelligible, refer exclusively to spiritual things, and are totally unrelated to ordinary life.

I consider it my task to unmask and correct these warped ideas by showing the reasonableness of giving the Scriptures a fair hearing. That Word of God, as illustrated by that remarkable story of the parable of the sower is indeed the good seed, with life in it and power bottled up in awesome proportions, but the ground on which that seed falls is ill prepared, stoney, and non-receptive. So I am like a bulldozer. I cut up the ground, using all sorts of machinery and verbal tools to prepare the soil.

That's what we spend time on, on board, tossing, cajoling, shaking all those frustrations people have when they approach that Word of God.

But it started to dawn that in order to come to grips with the heart of the Christian religion, Christ Himself, we had to get to the Scriptures.

And it is quite interesting to see how, as long as is possible, people try to keep those Scriptures at bay. They are attacked as to their origin, their manner of address, their purpose, as long as their pointing finger of accusation to our sins, and their beckoning hand to come to the living Christ are stayed. It is a curious thing that man, in the last analysis, does not want to have his salvation. Perhaps that is the most astonishing thing in this world.

But it will not prevent us from 'preaching it from the rooftops' or chief-officers' cabin floors, as the case may be. So I came out with it openly and directly after about two hours. The Word of God is the key to it all. It unlocks the mysteries. Through it the Spirit of God is pleased to work.

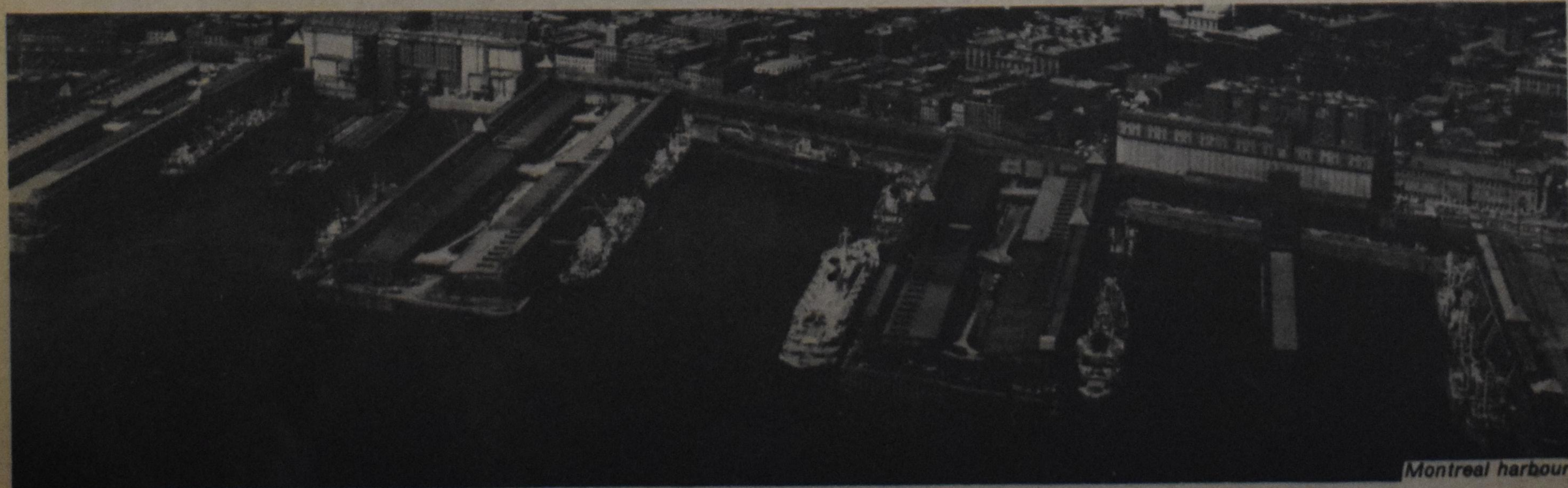
But to the chief officer who during the last hour had become increasingly vocal in his rejection of my testimony, this open suggestion of an examination of the Word of God, was indeed the height of folly.

"Let me tell you", he said, "how most people and particularly I myself, view that Bible of yours; I can put it in one down to earth, plain word: Ballast." As a heavy stone that word, with formidable weight fell out of his mouth: Ballast.

I knew the history of the m.v. Gondola, how it had braved the North Atlantic in a raging, furious storm, how some of its locomotives had been scorned off their moorings and dumped into the ocean like teabags thrown out of a teapot. I knew that some of its crew members at one time, as the ship had listed more than 45 degrees, had disappeared and drowned. I knew that the ship this very moment was berthed in my port and all of us were on it in all quietude, because not only the grace of the Lord had preserved us, but also, and that in a very real sense, the ballast tanks had kept this ship afloat. I couldn't withstand the temptation. "My dear chief officer", I said, "I understand you are taking on a load of prefabricated houses for Casablanca."

"On previous occasions I have seen this ship come to pick up some heavy locomotives for some obscure ports in Africa, of which I have never heard."

Continued on page 6



Montreal harbour

Ballast

Continued from page 5

"That's also correct," he replied again.

"Is it not true", I continued, "that this ship once came here to pick up parts of a submarine which had to be delivered to Houston, Texas?"

"Yes, indeed", he said, "you have a good memory".

"Never mind the memory," I replied, "but do you know what strikes me all the time about this vessel?"

"No," he said, "tell me."

"Well, you see, every time the m.v. Gondola comes to Montreal you sail into this port completely empty. You never come in with a load for Canada." I hoped with all my heart that he would catch my sudden typically non-naval language, and sure enough he did.

Putting on his best 'teacher's tone' and with a slight smile playing around his lips in obvious delight that he could now teach me a little lesson he solemnly said, "Padre, we do not speak of ships sailing empty, we say a ship sails in ballast".

"Of course," I said, "isn't it true that you couldn't cross the ocean with an empty ship without ballast?"

"You are learning, Padre," he said.

Inspired by his encouragement I continued: "So it is safe to say then that your life on board ship at times is totally dependent on ballast, right?"

Suddenly it dawned on him that I was trying to steer him to a point where I would be able to bring in anew that Bible, as his hasty judgment of it, being but ballast, came back to him.

Before he could respond, the second engineer got to his feet and openly admitted, "I think I am convinced, have you got a copy?" As I reached into my box, which I have always at close hand, the master suggested we honor the cook's already twice - rejected invitation to come down for lunch - fully one hour over time...

The following morning I decided to see my discussion with the chief officer through with a firm presentation. I realized the time and possibly the atmosphere might be different, but I counted on the Lord's blessing.

As I came on board, I found everyone rushing about as a new compliment of officers had been flown in to replace the present compliment, whose contract had expired.

Exited with the thought of starting a good long vacation, the chief officer and his wife were busily packing, readying themselves to fly out that night.

As I knocked on their cabin door, they immediately invited me in, expressing their appreciation for the long and exciting discussion of the previous day.

I thanked them for their courteous remarks and then, after gently closing their cabin door to create a measure of privacy, said, "I thought I should come back, and seeing you are going home without any 'load', perhaps I could supply you with the ballast."

Pulling a copy of the New Testament out of a large envelope, I placed it on the table.

There was a moment's silence. Somehow their hearts had been touched. I could see it in their eyes.

As they regained their composure, the chief officer said, "We have been talking about it, but we didn't quite dare ask since we are flying home, yet we'd sure hate flying without ballast, for who knows, you may be right after all."

PASTORAL COUNSELLING

This year there is a lot of gloom hanging over our country, in fact over the entire world. You hear a lot of gloomy predictions for the future. We know there are many people out of work. We know that our dollars are not worth what they were a year ago. There is concern for our nation which brings about a certain feeling of depression.

There are also this Christmas more single parent families than ever before. Each year there are a number of widows left with their family, but in addition to this there has been tremendous increase in the rate of divorce, to the extent that there are more single parent families and particularly those who are supervised by the mother. This means that these families have more financial difficulties because most mothers are not able to make the kind of living a man can make. They are not able to carry on work because they also have to take care of a family. And so there is a shadow that is cast over Christmas for a family like that.

We have seen at old age homes that around Christmas time there are more depressed people than usual. I have frequently heard people say that they dread the holiday season because it gives them the holiday blues. Why should this be so? If we are honest with ourselves we must confess that we are happy when the holiday season is past. Many people don't look forward to Christmas or New Year, and the talk about the joy of Christmas or the songs of Christmas leaves a hollow ring in their ears.

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

We would not like to lose the manger. We would not like to lose the stable in Bethlehem, because this brings out the thought that God came down in the form of man. If you want to find Him you have to bend very lowly to see Him.

For some families this is understandable. A family that has a vacant chair at the Christmas table is naturally going to feel it more keenly on that day. If someone has lost her husband she may do what she can to see to it that her children have a happy Christmas by buying gifts and preparing a Christmas dinner; but basically Christmas and the holiday season is a time of rejoicing with the family, and if there is a scar in the family, an empty place, it is natural that there is not going to be that kind of joy, there is going to be a certain amount of sadness.

Possibly one of the saddest situations is where there has been a divorce. If a person dies one can say at least, "The Lord took him," but if someone leaves because of infidelity, that makes it very hard. There are more families like this, this year than ever before and a substantial number.

Gloom at Christmas

As we look at the holiday season what is it really all about? The holiday season should be a time of joy. I know we have emphasized giving and receiving gifts and all of this is part of the joy of Christmas. As we get a little older we find that's not the meaning of Christmas, that's not the joy of Christmas. Some of the families where the husband has been out of work for a while, where they cannot afford all the luxuries of former Christmases, or where they can not have the kind of food that they used to, can well have a better Christmas than they ever had before.

For a number of years I preached in Pine Rest Christian Hospital on Christmas Day and I have often felt that the true meaning of Christmas stood out more strongly in gloomy situations than if everything was prosperous and rosy. Prosperity doesn't give joy and satisfaction. The trinkets and the gifts that we buy at Christmas are soon lost and broken and put away, but there is something about the season that ought to stay, and that is the beauty of the Christ as He came on that night, born to a peasant girl, laid in a stable. Or think of the beauty of the song of the angels and the angelic messenger that announced His coming. This is something that is often lost.

I wonder sometimes whether this is lost because we want it that way. When Christmas comes along, we often lose sight of some of the spiritual factors that make up the life of the Christian and the joy of the Christian, and we don't share in them because we don't feel them as deeply as we should. We've covered up our Christmases with tinsel and ringing bells, carols and beautifully wrapped packages, and we have lost sight of God's marvelous gift. I would like to call you back to that. The event of Jesus' birth is significant but we've lost its meaning in the way we celebrate it. Often people will say, "When are you going to celebrate your Christmas this year?" That doesn't mean, "When are you going to worship," but, "When are you going to have your family get-together?" That's Christmas to a lot of people, and many have been brought up in that kind of an atmosphere. Our background from when we were children, our home life, our many years of celebrating Christmas, have centered on the outward things and we have missed its basic meaning.

The day of Christmas should be a day of joy, not a day of depression or of gloom. It is tragic that Christmas becomes like that. I read a story of one who had experienced the hardship of a concentration camp where the food that they got every day consisted of thin soup, crusty bread and coffee and where they didn't know what the future would bring. The person who told this story said, "Never in all my days have I experienced a Christmas like that! It was gloomy outdoors, it was gloomy around me, but somehow the star of Bethlehem shone more brightly in my heart than it had ever done before on Christmas." Let's celebrate in the proper spirit, so that we have not only a happy Christmas but a healthy one.

Jaarboek 1977 Gereformeerde Gemeenten in Nederland en in N.A.

Overgenomen uit
kerknieuws, 21 okt.

Veel gegevens

De redacteur, ds H. Rijkse te Zoetermeer, schreef weer een Ten geleide en een kerkelijk jaaroverzicht over het afgelopen jaar.

Het aantal vacatures bedraagt inderdaad 105. Er zijn 51 dienstdoende predikanten. Daarnaast zijn er nog drie zendingspredikanten. Uiteraard betreft dit de stand van zaken op 31 december 1976. Daarna is de situatie al weer veranderd. Twee predikanten voltooiden hun studie en namen een beroep aan.

Predikantentekort

Meer dan tweederde van de gemeenten is dus vacant. Er is derhalve een groot predikantentekort. Daarin zal echter voorlopig weinig verandering komen, want er studeren aan de Theologische School in Rotterdam thans geen studenten die in 1978 beroepbaar

zullen zijn. Ook de volgende lichtingen zijn erg klein. Elke predikant moet er dus gemiddeld twee consulentschappen bij hebben. Gemiddeld heeft een predikant de pastorale zorg voor meer dan 1500 leden.

Groei

Het aantal leden van de gemeenten stijgt nog ieder jaar. In 1976 vermeerderde het met 546. Het valt op dat het aantal doopleden minder stijgt dan het aantal belijdende leden. Het eerste groeide met 114, het tweede met 432. Toch moet de groei veroorzaakt worden door het aantal geboorten. Het blijkt ook dat er meer leden de gemeenten verlieten dan dat erbij kwamen. Er traden n.l. 564 leden toe, maar 1029 gingen er weg. Van hen die vertrokken, waren er 600 doopleden. Op een uitzondering na geldt van alle kerkgemeenschappen dat men er meer mensen aan 'verloor'

dan dat men daaruit aantrok. Die ene uitzondering wordt gevormd door de Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken: er kwamen er 128 uit deze kerkgemeenschap over en er gingen er 73 naar toe.

Gemeenten in het buitenland

Uiteraard licht het boekje de belangstellende lezer ook in over de gemeenten in het buitenland die met de Gereformeerde Gemeenten correspondentie onderhouden. Dat zijn in de eerste plaats The Netherlands Reformed Congregation of the United States and Canada. Deze gemeenschap telt 23 gemeenten, verdeeld over twee classes, n.l. classis East, and Mid West met 10 gemeenten en een classis West en Far West met 13 gemeenten. Deze 23 gemeenten tellen samen 7788 leden. De gemeenten hebben zeven dienstdoende predikanten. De verhouding tussen het aantal predikanten en het aantal vacante gemeenten is

dus ongeveer gelijk aan die in de gemeenten in Nederland. Dan zijn er nog twee gemeenten elders in de wereld, die het verband met de Gereformeerde Gemeenten onderhouden, n.l. Randburg in Zuid-Afrika en Whitemans Valley in Nieuw-Zeeland die beide door emigratie zijn ontstaan.

Praktische wenken

Het boekje geeft ook praktische wenken. Zo kan men er aanwijzingen vinden inzake testamentaire beschikkingen en de aanmelding van nieuwe geïnstitueerde gemeenten bij de overheid. Typerend voor deze gemeenten zijn ook de inlichtingen die er gegeven worden over de procedure die men moet volgen voor het vragen van vrijstelling van de verplichting tot inenting. Dit is uiteraard van belang voor de militairen, die ook ingelicht worden over de wijze waarop een verzoek om vrijstelling van het reizen op zondag moet

worden ingediend.

Kritiek op alternatieve verzoeningsleer

Het boekje bevat ook enkele artikelen. Wij noemden al het woord vooraf en het kerkelijk overzicht, geschreven door ds Rijkse. Verder wordt er aan elk van de beide predikanten die overleden zijn, een artikel gewijd. Dat heeft ook ds Rijkse gedaan. Het boekje besluit met een artikel van de heer N. van der Kolk te Zoetermeer, dat getiteld is Naar een nieuwe leer der verzoening? Uitvoerig gaat de heer Van der Kolk in op de opvattingen van dr. H. Wiersinga. Hij tracht begrip op te brengen voor dr. Wiersinga, omdat deze de boodschap van de bijbel mag en moet brengen in de studentenwereld en mag en moet trachten het evangelie voor zijn hoorders verstaanbaar over te brengen. Maar hij heeft uiteraard wel ernstige kritiek op diens opvattingen.

Veiliger berijden van snowmobilen begint met een cursus voor bestuurders.

Dit is wat Ontario aanraadt voor de veiligheid ervan.



Rijden in een snowmobile is voor veel mensen in Ontario een manier van leven geworden, omdat het een gezonde, plezierige sport is. Het is ook vaak een noodzaak in verafgelegen gebieden of in nood toestanden.

Nu kunnen u en uw familieleden van een deskundige leren een snowmobile te

besturen, door een Driver Training Course die aangeboden wordt door de Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs (OFSC) in samenwerking met de Ontario Safety League en uw Ontario Ministry of Transportation and Communication.

De cursus is ontworpen voor jongelui van 12-15 jaar en voor personen van 16 jr

en ouder die nog geen rijbewijs hebben. Geslaagden ontvangen een certificaat van bekwaamheid dat op elk MTC rij-examen bureau, tegen een vergoeding van \$2 geldig kan worden verklaard als rijbewijs voor het besturen van een snowmobile.

Voor volledige inlichtingen omtrent de OFSC Driver Training Course kunt u contact opnemen met het OFSC Driver Training Office, R.R.#1 Jordan Station, Ontario L0R 1S0. Telephone (416) 562-4922.

Gratis handboek

Vraag om een gratis nummer van het "Snowmobilers Handbook", met regels voor snowmobilers, veiligheidstips, route informatie, tekens, informatie betreffende de training cursus, wind-kou factor tabel, and andere nuttige dingen — bij ieder MTC rij-examen centrum of rijbewijs bureau. Voorradig midden-December.



James Snow,
Minister of Transportation
and Communications

William Davis, Premier

Province of Ontario

HET KERSTFEEST: HOEVEEL KOST HET?

Wat wordt dat vaak gevraagd. Ook als er wat gedaan wordt door de kerk, dan is de vraag: hoeveel kost het? En dan wordt er een quota vastgesteld. En het wordt de mensen verteld: het kost zoveel per gezin!

We hopen kerstfeest te vieren. En moeten we dan ook niet de rekening opmaken en vragen: hoeveel kost het? En als ik u die vraag stel dan bedoel ik toch echt niet de onkosten die u gemaakt hebt om dat feest te vieren, met uw huisgenoten, uw kinderen. Dan bedoel ik niet al die kosten van de entourage, want er is bij velen iets extra's met de feestdagen. Neen, ik wil nu eens dieper afdalen met die kostenberekening, om zo de echte betekenis van het kerstfeest aan u op te dringen. De zin van het feest hangt immers niet af van die uiterlijke dingen. Bij al die entourage kan het hart nog wel koud zijn, en de zegen uitblijven. Als ik dus vraag: wat kost het kerstfeest, dan bedoel ik niet de kosten die u gemaakt hebt, maar dan vraag ik naar de prijs die betaald moest worden opdat wij kerstfeest zouden kunnen vieren.

Wat kost het God de Vader?

Boven de kribbe van Bethlehem kunnen we schrijven: zo lief had God de wereld, dat Hij Zijn eniggeboren Zoon gegeven heeft. Dat zijn de hoge kosten voor Hem. De Vader moet zijn eigen Zoon geven. Hij gaf zijn Zoon over aan deze zondige wereld opdat wij Hem zouden doden, om notabene door die dood die wereld te redden! Zo'n kostprijs is ons vreemd. Paulus zegt er van: niet licht zal iemand zijn leven geven voor een rechtvaardige. Misschien heeft iemand daartoe de moed. Maar het is een zeldzaamheid. Doch God bewijst Zijn liefde jegens ons toen wij nog zondaars waren, door Zijn Zoon te geven. Eerst in de kribbe en daarna op de lijdensweg, en tenslotte aan het kruis. Dat is de kostprijs: de gave van Zijn Zoon. Wij kunnen nooit peilen wat het geweest is voor God de Vader. Mensengedachten zijn daarvoor ontoereikend en woorden helemaal.

We kunnen al zo moeilijk zeggen wat het voor God betekent dat Hij een Zoon heeft, laat staan dat wij zouden kunnen voelen wat het zeggen wil voor God om die Zoon af te staan. En de Vader is in de Zoon Zichzelf. Als Hij de Zoon geeft dan is Hij eigenlijk ook Zichzelf. De liefde betaalt aan de gerechtigheid. Hij had Zijn eniggeboren Zoon niet te lief. Hij had de wereld ook zo lief. Hij had u lief. En Hij betaalde wat er betaald moest worden. Hij betaalde de hoge kosten voor het kerstfeest met zijn eigen Zoon. En de engelen hebben gezongen: Ere zij God in de hoogste hemelen, want er komt vrede op aarde in de harten van mensen in wie God een welbehagen heeft. En kerstfeest betekent: de Zoon van God is gekomen. God de Vader heeft de kostprijs betaald.

Wat kost het de Zoon?

Immers de Zoon van God is niet passief in zijn komen tot deze wereld. Hij heeft zich van eeuwigheid beschikbaar gesteld om te gaan. Hij heeft er vrijwillig in toegestemd. Uit de hemel is Hij neergedaald. Hij heeft de heerlijkheid van Zijn Vader verlaten. Hij heeft zich onttrokken. Hij heeft afstand gedaan van alles wat Hij bij de Vader had. Het kostte Hem veel. De volle uitstraling van de Goddelijke heerlijkheid, de rijkdom die Hij bij de Vader had. Hij gaf het alles prijs. En de kinderen zingen met kerstfeest: Hij verliet Zijns Vaders heerlijk huis. Hij deed het! Hij, die aan God gelijk was

heeft die heerlijkheid niet voor zichzelf gehouden. Hij is mens geworden en nam uit Maria aan een verzwakte menselijke natuur die vatbaar was voor lijden en dood. Hij trok een omhulling aan over Zijn goddelijke heerlijkheid, verborg haar achter de mantel van de menselijke natuur. In plaats van zich als God te openbaren, wat Hij toch inderdaad was, openbaarde Hij zich als een dienstknecht. Hij openbaart zich zelfs niet als een mens in volle paradijs-heerlijkheid, maar wordt Jozef en Maria en ons allen gelijk, behalve de zonde.

Vader en Zoon hebben het kerstfeest mogelijk gemaakt. Zij hebben geen kosten gespaard om dit feest voor de wereld te bereiden. De Vader gaf zijn eigen Zoon, de Zoon gaf al de hemelse heerlijkheid er aan, om deze wereld te bezoeken met Gods heil. Engelen en sterrenwereld worden ingeschakeld om dit kerstfeest aan de wereld bekend te maken. Er lag een kind in de kribbe, en het was de Zoon van God. Dat was een vernedering dat was een offer. Dat kan een engelenzang in Efrata's velden niet vergoeden. Dat kan niet vergoed worden door goud, wierook en myrrhe. De kosten van stal en kribbe blijven hoog. God de Vader en God de Zoon hebben ze echter betaald.

Wat kost het ons?

Het kost ons niets. God de Vader en de Zoon hebben alle kosten voor het kerstfeest betaald. Volkomen betaald. Er valt voor ons niet in de kosten bij te dragen.

De herders moeten luisteren, en gaan, en vinden. Simeon en Anna moeten zien en loven. De wijzen uit het oosten moeten kijken en op reis gaan en vinden. Er is op het kerstfeest voor ons niet anders te doen dan te horen en te kijken en te geloven en te getuigen. Komt verwondert u hier mensen, ziet hoe dat u God bemint.

Het kost niets! O, alle dorstigen, komt tot de wateren, en gij die geen geld hebt, komt, koopt en eet; ja, koopt zonder geld en zonder prijs wijn en melk. Hier bij het kind in de kribbe is alles te krijgen. Voor niets. Het hele kerstfeest krijgt u van God cadeau. Gratis reikt Hij het heil uit aan allen die het maar horen willen. Eenvoudigen en rijken. Hier geldt geen adel, staat of pracht. Al wie door ootmoed wordt herboren, is van het hemelse geslacht. Ziet hoe dat u God bemint!

Komt alle dorstigen, de rivier is vol

water. De stroom des heils verzweigt al uw ongerechtigheden. En u behoeft niets bij te dragen in de hoge kosten van dit grootse kerstgebeuren. Niets. U kunt het ook niet, want u bent arm. Het behoeft echter ook niet. Hier worden gaven uitgereikt, gaven van genade en vrede. Dat is kerstfeest.

Gaat u het zo vieren? Of hebt u het zo gevierd? De kostprijs is betaald. Zomaar wordt het heil met handenvol uitgereikt aan ieder die met lege handen komt.

U wilde misschien iets bijdragen. Ja, zo zijn wij mensen. Wij willen niets voor niets. Wij willen meebetalen. Zo doen we. We hebben een hekel aan mensen die klaplopen. We willen meebetalen. Graag zelfs.

Zo staan we op het kerstfeest bij de kribbe. Er was een engelen lied. Er was een lofverheffing. Er waren hoge kosten aan verbonden. En wij staan er met lege handen. Wij hadden niets. Gelukkig... we hadden ook niets nodig. Die geen geld heeft, komel!

Dat is het evangelie: het kost niets. Goedkoper kan het niet. Daar willen we misschien niet aan. Het is ons te eenvoudig, te goedkoop. We willen zelf wat doen. Wat geven. Maar wat? Waarmee willen wij aan komen dragen bij de kribbe van Betlehem? Kunt u iets bedenken? Laten we er maar niet meer over praten. We kunnen niet meebetalen. Praat niet over de kostenberekening en uw aandeel in deze zaak. U wordt alleen maar uitgenodigd om in het kerstgebeuren te geloven, om te aanbidden, om het heil in Christus te aanvaarden, om dat te loven met de engelen: Christus is geboren! God heeft gedacht aan Zijn genade! Hij heeft de wereld lief, Hij zond Zijn Zoon, en nu: de zaligmakende genade Gods is verschenen aan alle mensen. God is liefde! Komt, koop en eet zonder prijs en zonder geld.

Het kost ons alles

En toch, het kost ons alles. Het klinkt tegenstrijdig, maar het is waar. Het kost u niets, dat hele kerstfeest, want Gods genade is te geef, en toch kost het u alles!

Wie niet verlaat alles wat hij heeft, die kan mijn discipel niet zijn, heeft Jezus eens gezegd, die kan niet staan bij de kribbe van Bethlehem met een gebogen hoofd, die kan daar ook zijn knieën niet buigen. Alles kost het! Kerstfeest vieren is moeilijk. Het is prijsgeven alles wat u hebt. Niet alleen het verkeerde, dat natuurlijk, maar

ook het goede. Niet alleen uw zonden, natuurlijk uw zonden, maar verder ook uw leven, uw idealen, uw bezit, uw geld en goed. Alles neerleggen bij de kribbe en dan zeggen: Heer, doe er mee wat U wilt. Neem mijn leven, laat het Heer, toegewijd zijn aan Uw eer. Dat kunnen we wel gemakkelijk zingen, maar als het er op aankomt, is het toch erg moeilijk. En dan ervaart u het: kerstfeest vieren kost alles!

Ieder die niet door een welbewuste keus afstand gedaan heeft van al wat hij heeft, van alles wat hem lief is, hoe hoog in waarde ook, en wat het hem ook kost om dat los te laten, ieder die dat niet gedaan heeft, die mist de kerstzegen, en de blijde boodschap over het kerstgebeuren. Nu komt het er dus voor ons op aan. Eerst leek het zo gemakkelijk, de Vader en de Zoon kostte het ontzettend veel, en het kostte ons niets! En nu aan het eind van dit artikel blijkt dat het ons alles kost. Nee, nu niet boos worden over deze totale eis. Geef u zelf maar met alles wat u hebt prijs aan de geboren Koning. Zeg het maar gerust: weg wereld, weg schatten, gij kunt niet bevatten hoe rijk ik wel ben. Ik heb alles verloren, daar hebt u het: alles verloren, maar Jezus verkoren, wiens eigen ik ben!

Er is 'n oud nederlands kerstlied dat zingt over de geschenken die meegebracht worden naar de kribbe:

Wat geschenken voert gij mee?
kiest gij van uw schoonste vee?
ach, van 't geen gij op kunt dragen
zal uw hart Hem 't meest behagen,
zie, geen offer is te groot
voor het Kind dat God ons bood.

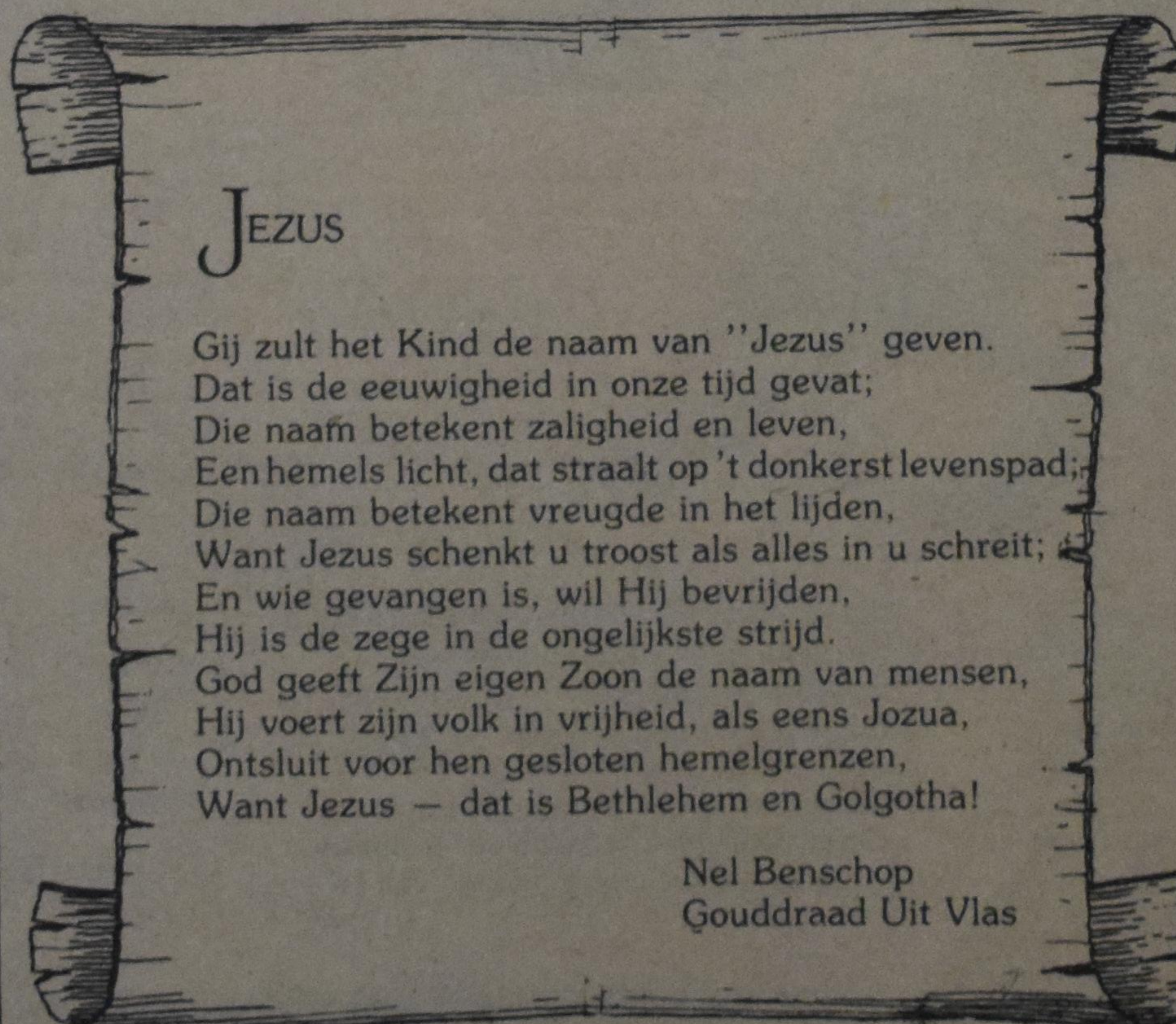
Wat kost het kerstfeest dan toch veel. Jezus vraagt alles van ons. Wij moeten onszelf offeren, en alles, en dan weet u wel wat tot dat alles behoort. Ik kan wel wat gaan opnoemen, maar het is *alles*!

Wat een weerstand is er dan te overwinnen. Want goud, wierook en myrrhe offeren, een extra hymn zingen, een loflied, een oratorium als de Messias uitvoeren, een extra gave in de collecte doen, och, dat kan allemaal wel. Dat is niet zo'n toer. Maar jezelf ter beschikking stellen van de Koning, bij Zijn kribbe neerknielen met een hart dat Hem geheel toebehoort, wat is dat moeilijk, wat eist dat een zelfverloochening. Dan gaat alles van ons er aan, dan moet alle ballast over boord, en dan is de hele lading voor Christus. En toch, de prijs is niet te hoog, het is niet te duur. Het kan niet teveel zijn, want u krijgt vergoeding van zonden en eeuwig leven. Uw honger wordt gestild en uw dorst gelest. Uw armoede wordt in rijkdom veranderd.

Het kerstfeest predikt u: het kost God de Vader en God de Zoon veel, heel veel, en het kost u niets, alleen dit ene: mijn zoon, mijn dochter, geef mij uw hart!

Is u dat dan te veel? Is u dat Jezus niet waard? Zijn deze kosten te hoog? Nu, houdt dan dat hart met al zijn zondige begeerten, met zijn verkeerde gedachten en wensen. Houdt dat hart dat vol is, maar niet van Jezus. Zou u dat willen? Het is veel beter dat u afstand doet van alles. En als u dat doet, dan viert u dit jaar een geweldig mooi kerstfeest. En dan zegt u: het was een enorm duur kerstfeest, de kosten waren voor God de Vader en de Zoon oneindig hoog, en voor mij niets, slechts mijn hart. En het blijft waar en wordt steeds benadrukt op het kerstfeest: Aan de Koning uitverkoren, uit een maagd voor ons geboren, moet ONS HELE HART behoren, onze lof en eer en prijs.

(Liedboek voor de Kerken no.140)



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LET'S PLAY CHESS

Results: 1977 Group C

A. deWeerd 1(1) J. Willemsma 0(0)

This is the first result of this group. Two more games must be finished before a winner is declared.

1977 Group D

E. Hoekstra 0(0) W.L. Boer 1(1)

With this win, Mr. Boer advanced to the final. Mr. Amsinga has already qualified as winner from Group B.

Final 1976

Mr. Fennema, if you would like to continue playing in the 1976 Finals, please send me your (new) address, since a letter to you was returned.

1978 5C Contest

I cannot accept any more entries for the 1978 5C contest because the games are already in progress. A suggestion for those who miss the deadline easily: mark a fall date on your new 1978 calendars and send me a note by then. I accept entries anytime before the deadline. In the meantime, solve the problems which come out every month in this paper so that we keep in touch. The column has been appearing rather irregularly mainly due to space shortage. I have not "retired" as some correspondent thought!

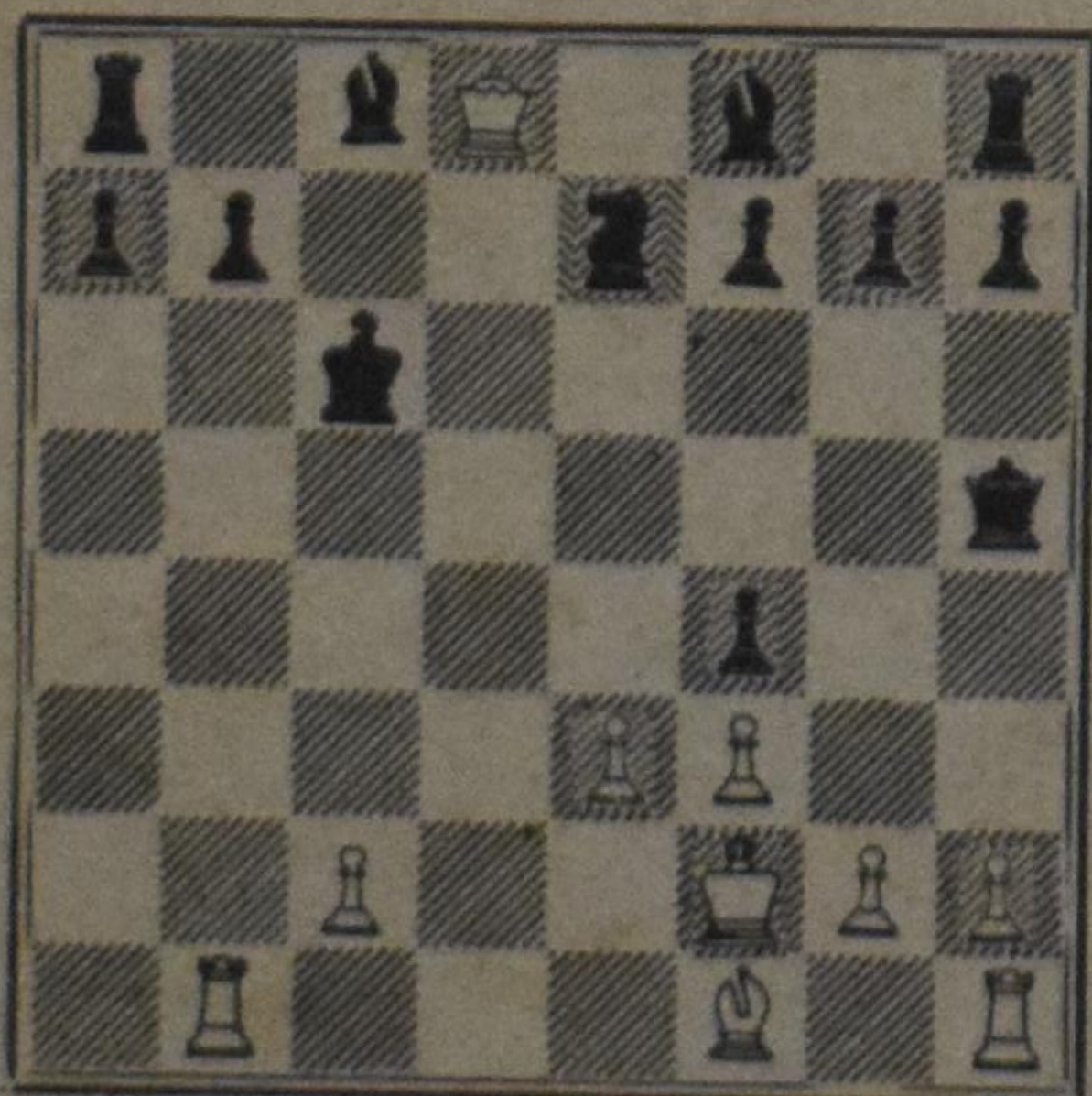
Here follows a strange game played in a tournament in London, 1912.

White: B. Leussen (Holland)

Black: I.H. Blake (England)

White	Black		
1. P-Q4	P-Q4	11. P-B3	P-K5
2. N-KB3	P-QB4	12. NXNch.,	KXN
3. B-B4	N-QB3	13. Q-Q8ch.,	KXN
4. P-K3	Q-N3	14. K-B2	PXB (see diag.)
5. N-B3	QXP	15. B-N5ch.,	QXB
6. NXP	PXP	16. RXQ	PXPch.,
7. R-QN1	QXRP	17. KXP	N-K2
8. N-B7ch.,	K-Q1	18. P-QB4	P-QR3
9. NXP	Q-R4ch.,	19. Q-N6ch.	Resigns because
10. K-K2	Q-R4ch.,		mate will follow in at most four moves.

Black



White After 14.....PXB

Mr. Leussen successfully sacrificed his pieces to draw out the poor Black King. Even, when Black resigned, he was numerically stronger.

Calendar of Events

Canadian Reformed Theological College lecture series.

Jan. 5- Five consecutive Thursdays, 8 p.m., college building, 374 Queen St. S., Hamilton, Rev. G. Van Dooren, lecturer. Theme: The teaching ministry of the church: the preaching ministry, teaching the four fundamentals, training for the offices, talents for building up the Body, equipped for Kingdom service. Admission is free.

Next issues of C.C.:

Dated	Mailed	Ad deadline
Dec. 23	Dec. 21	Dec. 19
Jan. 6	Jan. 4	Jan. 2
Jan. 13	Jan. 11	Jan. 9

There will be no Dec. 30 issue.

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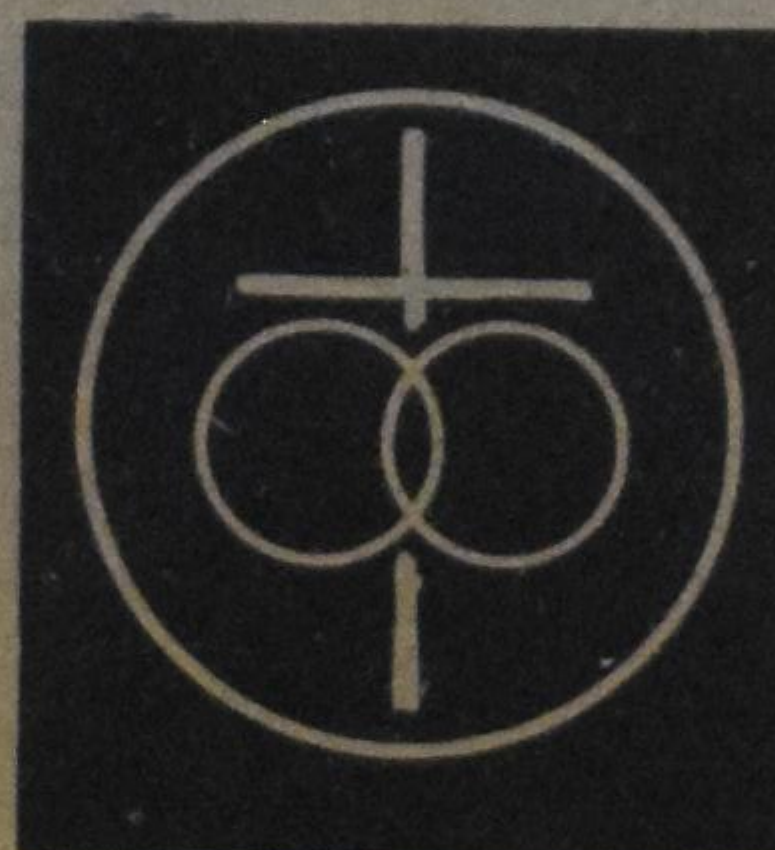
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Extends a warm and special invitation to all former members
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SOCIAL EVENING

Friday — January 27, 1978

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Saturday — January 28, 1978

SPECIAL ANNIVERSARY SERVICE

Sunday — January 29, 1978 at 7 p.m.

For accommodation, further information or an Anniversary Book, please contact Mrs. Jane Pranger, 16 Trillium Ave., Ottawa, Ont. K2E 5M9 (Tel. 613-224-1796). Please reply before Dec. 21, 1977.

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Notes of Thanks

VERMEULEN: Peter and Jennie Vermeulen wish to thank all relatives and friends who made their 25th Wedding anniversary a very happy day. Thanks for the best wishes, cards, letters, flowers and gifts.
 Bowmanville, Ontario.

Births

BELDMAN: Bill and Claire (nee Assies) wish to announce with great thankfulness to God who made it all possible, the arrival of their daughter **HALIMA JOY** born Jan. 12, 1977 in Khulna Bangladesh. A loving sister for Gerald, Roger, and Cameron. His faithfulness abideth ever. R.R.#2 Hannon, Ont. November 30, 1977.

DEVRIES: With thankfulness to God, who has made all things well, we joyfully announce the birth of our son. We named him **THOMAS JONATHAN** weighed 7 lbs. 5 oz. and was born on December 3, 1977. Happy parents are Jake and Theresa DeVries, R.R.#2, Drayton, Ontario. Grandparents are: Mr. and Mrs. Klaas DeVries, R.R.#2 Drayton. and Mr. and Mrs. John T. Nymeyer, R.R.#2 Alma.

ZYLSTRA: With thanks to God, Bill and Anne joyfully announce the safe arrival on November 19 of **DAVID PAUL**, a brother for Michael. Grandparents are Mr. and Mrs. A. VanDyk of Fruitland and Mr. and Mrs. P. Zylstra of Hamilton. 352 Trudeau Drive, Sarnia, Ontario.

Marriages

HENGEVELD: Hallelujah, Praise Jehovah! On November 28, 1977 God enriched our family with the birth of a third beautiful baby. The arrival of **MARTIN ANDREW** was eagerly anticipated by Ryan Henry and Diana Margriet. The happy grandparents are Mr. & Mrs. R. Bakker of Guelph and Mr. & Mrs. H. Hengeveld of Woodville. Bernard & Lucy Hengeveld, 121 Irving Pl., London, Ont., N5V 2H6.

VAN WINGERDEN: With grateful hearts to the Giver of Life, we wish to announce the birth of our third child, a daughter, **KIMBERLEY NICOLE** 7 lb. 9 oz. born on Nov. 24, 1977. Thankful parents Bob and Alice VanWingerden (nee Wesseling), 15 Grenada Dr., Simcoe, Ont. N3Y 4N7. A little sister for Michael & Pamela.

Marriages

VANDERHOEK-WYNIA: Mr. and Mrs. Bert VanderHoek of Agassiz, B.C. are pleased to announce the forthcoming marriage of their daughter **LEONA** to **CHARLES**, son of Mr. and Mrs. Jake Wynia of Agassiz, B.C. The ceremony will take place D.V. on Thursday, January the twelfth, 1978 in the Christian Reformed Church of Agassiz at 8 p.m. Rev. W. Geerts officiating.

Anniversaries

Springdale Brampton
 1953 1978

On January 2, 1978, the Lord willing, we hope to celebrate with our beloved parents and grandparents, their 25th Wedding Anniversary.

LOUIS MOLENHUIS
 and
THERESA MOLENHUIS
 nee Dryfhout

We thank God for His blessings in the past, and pray for His blessings in the future.

Psalm 124:8. Our help is from the Lord who made Heaven and Earth. Their thankful children:

Brampton—Al and daughter Lisa Molenhuis
 Jim and Coby Molenhuis
 Sid Molenhuis and fiancée Teresa Meneray
 Mississauga—Liz and Joe Busuttill
 Brampton—Louis Molenhuis Jr.
 Margaret Molenhuis
 Home Address: 54 Gretna Drive, Brampton, Ont.

Anniversaries

On December 26, 1977 D.V.

REV. RAYMOND H. HAAN

and

HENRIETTA HAAN (nee Buurma)

hope to celebrate their fiftieth wedding anniversary.

With the Psalmist we say, "Praise the Lord, O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good; for his mercy endures forever." Ps. 106:1.

Their children are:

Gaylord J. and Jane; Douglas & James.

Raymond H. Jr. and Claretta; Raymond III, Phillip, Julie and Mandy

Nelson E. and Janet; Michael, Mark and Michelle.

An open house in their honor will be held on December 28 at 8:15 p.m. at the Covenant Christian Reformed Church of Cutlerville. The open house will be preceded by a family program of praise and thanksgiving beginning at 7:30 p.m. in the church sanctuary. Guests are welcome to attend the program if they desire. No gifts please.

Rev. and Mrs. Haan reside at 27 Morning Glory S.W., Grand Rapids, Mi. 49508.

Moordrecht Brampton
 1932 1977

2 Timothy 1: 13

We are happy and thankful that on December 28th, 1977 we may celebrate the 45th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents,

JORIS (GEORGE) VANDERHAM
 and
LAURINA VANDERHAM
 (nee Roodzand)

We wish them many more years together and the Lord's richest blessings.

Their thankful children:

Chatham, Ont.—John and Alice Verkaik; Johnny, Timothy, Dorothy, and Nina.

Hamilton, Ont.—John and Wanda Vanderham; Lance, Jo-Ann and Wayne.

Brampton, Ont.—Frank and Peggy Toirkens; Lauraine and Josh.

Montreal, Que.—Cliff and Laura McNally.

Brampton, Ont.—Meindert and Cora Kalverda; Leona, Michael, and Tanya.

Home Address: 22 Brisco St., Brampton, Ont.

Anniversaries

Brantford Simcoe
 1952 1977

Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labour in vain.

Psalm 127:1

We are happy and thankful to God, that on December 7 we celebrated the 25th Wedding Anniversary of our parents and grandparents.

BILL STELPSTRA

and

JOOP STELPSTRA-Renkema

A reception will be held on December 30 in the Christian Reformed Church, Oak St., Simcoe, at 8:00 p.m.

Simcoe—David and Nancy Steipstra Joel and Cameron

Ted Stelpstra and Pam Philippines—Robert Stelpstra

Simcoe—Lynne Stelpstra.

57 Charlton Cres., Simcoe, Ont. N3Y 1A8.

Koekange(Dr.) Drayton, Ont.
 1927 1977

The Lord willing on December 31, 1977 we will celebrate the 50th wedding anniversary of our beloved parents, grandparents and great grandparents,

ALBERT RUMPH

and

LUTINA RUMPH nee Kwant

We thank God for His love and guidance through these years and pray that He will continue to bless them.

Their thankful children and grandchildren:

Grimsby—Henry & Lammie Rumph Mary & John, Cindy & Henry, Albert & Joanne, Janet & Harold Irene & Arthur, Helen, Brian.

Puerto Rico—Arnold & Anne Marie Albert & Sue, Amy, Robert, Edward, Cindy, Christina

Drayton—Hilbert & Diny Rumph; Alfred, Jacqueline, Bernice, Nancy, Arnold

Toronto—Jake & Teresa Rumph; Debbie, David, Eddy, Cynthia

Palmerston: Hilda & John Steenberg; Annette, Fred, Alvin, Eileen, James

Kitchener—Alice & Ralph VanDyk; Sandra, Pauline, Michael, Gloria

Cambridge—Albert & Ann Rumph; Brenda Lea, Ronnie, Catherine, Monica, Jason

8 great grandchildren

Open House will be held Monday, January 2 from 2-4 p.m. in the Moorefield Community Hall, Box 256 Drayton, Ont. Winter Address: Carlyn Estates No. 95. Trailer Court, Palmetto, Florida 33561.

Anniversaries

Drayton Smithville
 1953 1978

Matthew 6:33

But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well.

With joy and gratitude to our Heavenly Father, we hope to celebrate, the Lord willing, on Jan. 2, 1978, the 25th Wedding Anniversary of our parents,

JOE and ELLY ZANTINGH

(nee Sinkgraven)

We pray that the Lord will continue to bless and keep them in the years to come.

Their thankful children and grandchildren:

Grimsby—Don and Tilda Dam; Michael

—Karen

Guelph—Henry

Dordt College, Iowa—Ron

At home—Tony, Nancy, Angela

Open House on Monday, January 2, 1978 from 1:30-4:00 p.m. in the hall of the Christian Reformed Church of Smithville.

Home Address: R.R.#2 Smithville, Ont. L0R 2A0.

Obituaries

On December 1, 1977, our Heavenly Father called to their eternal home, our dear mother and sisters,

MIEN KAP

age 63, beloved wife of John Kap.

HELEN LAMMERS (nee Kap)

age 34, beloved wife of Bert Lammers, and mother of Stephanie and Shawn,

JOAN KEANIE (nee Kap)

age 31, beloved wife of Brian Keanie, and mother of Karen.

Sarnia, Ont.—Henry Cain

Kingsville, Ont.—Frank & Vicky Kap

Strathroy, Ont.—Mieke & Martin Postma

C.A.F.B. Trenton, Ont.—Carl Kap

Sarnia, Ont.—Susan Kap

"The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Job. 1:21

Sarnia, Ont.

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of my hands."

John 10: 27 & 28 (R.S.V.)

God, in His Wisdom, took from the midst of our Congregation, three members of the

JOHN KAP-FAMILY

Though it is hard to realize, and difficult to understand, we acknowledge that God has a plan for each of our lives.

In Lord's Day I of the Heidelberg Catechism we confess, that we belong body and soul, in life and in death, to our Faithful Saviour, Jesus Christ. In the assurance that these dear members of our Congregation have gone to be with our triune God, we therefore rejoice with them in praise to God.

The Young People Society of the Sarnia First Christian Reformed Church expresses its sincere sympathy to our Secretary Susan Kap, the John Kap-family, the Bernie Keanie-family and the Bert Lammers-family in this difficult time.

On behalf of the Young People of the Church: John Rekman, President; and Sid Brouwer, Vice-Pres.

On the evening of November 25, 1977 graduation day of the London District Secondary School our heavenly Father graduated unto Himself my two best friends,

NEIL WYNANDS

and

JOHN POORT

Living or dying we follow the Lord.

Either way we are His. Rom. 14:8

Joop DeVoeest

Season's Greetings

Hank and Audrey Boer and family wish all their relatives and friends a joyous Christmas and a blessed new year.
 R.R.#2 Creek Rd. S., Niagara on the Lake, Ont. L0S 1J0.

Een gezegend Kerstfeest en een gelukkig nieuw jaar toe gewenst aan de familie en vrienden.
 Mrs. Bosma-VanGoor, Hamilton, Ont.

Wij wensen de familie en vrienden een gelukkig Kerstfeest en veel heil en zegen in het nieuwe jaar.
 Mr. & Mrs. A. Bremer, 241 Federal St., Stoney Creek, Ont.

To relatives, friends and neighbours we wish you all God's blessings at Christmas and may your joy increase through a happy New Year.
 Harry, John and Susan DeGroot, Smithville, Ont.

We like to wish all our relatives and friends a blessed Christmas and the Lord's guidance and blessing for the coming year.

Jack and Gertie de Roos, 7 Stenzel Crt., Beamsville, Ont.

To all our relatives and friends we wish to express our sincere wishes for a blessed Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Mr. & Mrs. R. Feddema, R.R.#5 Strathroy, Ont.

To all our friends and relatives; May the blessings of Christmas, The peace, joy and cheer Remain with you always, Each day in the year.

....when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son....

Gal. 4:4

John & Laura Heeringa and family.

Mrs. Gertrude Knight wishes all her relatives and friends a Blessed Christmas and the Lord's special guidance in 1978.
 Box 66, Fenwick, Ont.

We wish all our relatives and friends a blessed Christmas and a happy New Year.

John & Jocelyn Langendoen, R.R.#1 Smithville.

Langs deze weg wensen wij al onze familie, vrienden en bekenden een gezegend Kerstfeest toe en tevens Gods onmisbare zegen voor het jaar 1978.

L. Van Harten en echtgenote

Wij wensen al onze familie en vrienden van ver en van dichtbij een gezegend Kerstfeest en een gezegend nieuw jaar.

Mr. & Mrs. H.Middel, R.R. 3, Port Colborne, Ont.



Aan familie, vrienden en bekenden een gezegend Kerstfeest en een gelukkig nieuw jaar toe gewenst.
 Mr. & Mrs. T. Miedema, 90 Lakeport Rd., St.Catharines, Ont. L2N 4P6.

Mrs. Jessie Talsma and family of 84A Elizabeth St. South, Brampton, Ont. wish their relatives and friends across Canada and in the United States a blessed Christmas and a happy New Year.

We wish all our friends and relatives the Lord's blessing at Christmas and His loving care and guidance for the New Year.

Klaas and Anna Tigchelaar, R.R.#1, Waterdown, Ont.

May the Lord bless all our relatives and friends with a blessed Christmas and New Year.

Fam. H. Vanderzwaag
 15 Leland St.
 Hamilton, Ont.

We like to wish all our relatives and friends a blessed Christmas and God's continued guidance through 1978.

Mr. & Mrs. W.S. Veenhof, 159 Bradley, St.Catharines, Ont.

We wish all our relatives, friends and acquaintances a blessed Christmas and God's guidance for the New Year.

Mr. & Mrs. Peter Veenstra, 53 Ghent St., St.Catharines, Ont.

Classified Advertising

Obituaries

On Friday, November 25th the Lord called Home at the age of 18 our grandson, nephew and cousin,
JOHN HUGO POORT

"When I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead; but he laid his right hand on me and said, 'Don't be afraid! Though I am the First and Last, the Living One who died, who is now alive forevermore, who has the keys of hell and death don't be afraid!'"

Rev. 1: 17, 18

Always be dearly remembered by:
Woodstock-Oma and Opa Poort
Wyoming—Oom Harm Poort
Harriston—Peter and Sylvia Vanderlei; David and Bill
Ingersoll—Peter and Hannah Poort, Sandra, Linda and Donny
Ingersoll—Deak and Katie Poort; Angela, Allison and Danny

After a lengthy illness and courageous suffering, the Lord took unto Himself our dear sister, sister in law and aunt,
GRACE VANDERWAL

Beloved wife of J. Iliohan, at the age of 54 years, on November 29, 1977 in Baarn, Holland.

Rijswijk, Holl.—D. Vanderwal, P.A. Vanderwal-Vanderhoeven
Barrie, Ont.—S. Vanderwal
Mississauga, Ont.—J. Vanderwal, Y. Vanderwal-VanDyk
And nieces and nephews
1562 Muir Rd., Mississauga, Ont.

On November 4, 1977, after a tragic accident, the Lord took home to Himself our dear son,
PETER WALTER SMITS

at the age of 21 years. "I love Him, because He first loved me."
Always remembered by his parents:
Aldergrove, B.C.—Wieger & Gelske Smits

His sisters:
Clearbrook, B.C.—Evelyn & Ralph Mulder
Castlegar, B.C.—Theresa & Dave Roberts
His brothers: John and Harold

The Lord in his great wisdom called one of his children to be in His Heavenly home, our dear son, brother, brother in law, and uncle,
WILLEM VELLENGA

Beloved husband of Tetje Vellenga, Brantford, Ont.

After a short but patiently borne illness; December 2, 1977 at the age of 50.

Exeter—Mr. & Mrs. Anske Vellenga

Mossley—Louis and Ann Vellenga
Strathroy—Bob and Tine Veenstra
Mount Brydges—Gerald and Wilma Sampsonius

London—Eva Vellenga
Tiverton—Adrian and Margaret Van Rooyen

Nephews and Nieces

Funeral service was held December 5, 1977 in the Bethel Reformed Church, Brantford, Ont. Rev. R. Hekhuis officiated.

On Tuesday, December 6, 1977 at the age of 74, our heavenly Father, in His infinite wisdom and love, called to be with Him forever, my dear husband, our father and grandfather,
CORNELIS BERGSHOEFF

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called, according to His purpose." Rom 8:28
Neli Bergshoeff
Winona, Ont.—Jackie & John Schellingerhoudt.

Grimsby, Ont.—John & Shirley Bergshoeff

Toronto, Ont.—George & Anne Bergshoeff

Bobcaygeon, Ont.—Neil & Joan Bergshoeff

Midhurst, Ont.—Harry & Annie Bergshoeff

and 13 grandchildren.

The funeral service was held on December 9, 1977 in the Christian Reformed Church in Fruitland. Rev. J. DeJong officiated.

Apt. 103, 90 King St. E., Stoney Creek, Ont. L8G 1K7.

Employ Wanted

Young man seeks to train further as **BAKER/BAKER'S HELP**; can begin as soon as January, 1978. I have some experience and would like to work in the general Toronto/Lake Ontario vicinity. Please reply to Box 4241 Calvinist Contact, 99 Niagara St., St.Catharines, Ont. L2R 4L3.

Personal

Would like a lady or couple traveling companion for same to see Europe summer or '78. Age 45-55. Willing to save money by staying in some YWCA or Youth Hostels. Must be congenial.
Write Mary Station A, Box 7601, Edmonton, Alta.

Een alleen wonend weduwnaar wenst in contact te komen met een gepensioneerd weduwe, 65 jaar of wat ouder. Is wonende in Lindsay in een zo goed als nieuwe bungalow met garage en grote tuin. Ben lid van de Chr. Ref. Church. Ben boven de 70 jaar maar nog kerngezond. In afwachting, Edward Andringa, 45 George St. E., Lindsay, Ont.

Needed

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Teachers Needed

VANCOUVER: By the end of March 1978, Vancouver Christian School will be in need of a teacher for its combined grade 3/4 classroom. Please send your application to

Frank DeVries, c/o the school, 5621 Killarney Street, Vancouver, B.C. V5R 3W4.

The Hamilton District Christian High School

28 Athens St.
Hamilton, Ont. L9C 3K9

will be in need of an **English** teacher, beginning the 2nd semester, January 1978. Please send resume to:

Mr. John E. Top, principal
Phone: 416-389-3411

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For Sale or Rent with option to buy in St.Catharines. New 3 or 4 bedroom home on Culdesac lot. Walking distance to Calvin Christian grade school, Beacon Christian High School, and the Christian Reformed Church. For more information write: Mr. Henry Poortinga, 25 Old Oxford Rd., St.Catharines, Ont. L2M 2J7 or phone [416]934-1689.

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Osterbrook Real Estate
R.R.#1 Chatham, Ont.
N7M 5J6, or
phone [519] 352-0558

Teachers Needed

LADNER: Ladner Chr.School will be in need of a new teacher for the second half of 1977-78 school term. Grade level: 4 & 5 (approximately 25 students). Minimum requirements B. of Ed. Preference given to applicants with special area of interest in French and/or P.E., but all applications will be reviewed. Salary: commensurate with NUCS standards. Starting date: January, 1, 1978 (negotiable to Feb.1) Please send all applications and/or requests for information to: Mr. Jake Lieuwen, Principal, Ladner Chr. School, 5280 - 48th Avenue, Delta, B.C.

COLLINGWOOD: Due to the passing of our principal, the Collingwood District Christian School is in need of a teacher (grades 5-8, 11 pupils) starting in Jan. 1978 or as soon as possible. Our preference is for a teacher who would be our principal for the next school year. Sent full resume with application to: Collingwood District Christian School Association, c/o Secretary of the Board, R.R. #3, Box 69, Stayner, Ont. L0M 1S0.

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Career Opportunity

We have an opening in our office for an independent young person to take care of our office work. The position requires primary book-keeping experience, receptionist duties and attending to walk-in clientele. The opening is with a printing firm in the Hamilton, Ont. area. Send letters and resumes to box #4235, Calvinist Contact, 99 Niagara Street, St. Catharines, Ont. L2R 4L3.

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Books

Study Guide to Promise and Deliverance

Promise and Deliverance: Study Guide, by Dr. Gordon Spykman, published by Paideia Press, St.Catharines, Ont., pp. 96; price: \$2.50.

by Rev. Herman Praamsma, Toronto

It was marvellous to be able to read "Verbonds Geschiedenis" in the excellent English translation brought out by Paideia Press recently. This very basic work fills a real need in our families and churches, and is destined to become a standard reference work for Sunday School teachers, Youth leaders, Evangelists who want to get to the heart of a Bible story without moralizing, and school teachers who are faced with the task of getting across the message of Scripture morning after morning.

And now the publisher has added to our delight by giving us a study guide competently written by Dr. Gordon Spykman of Calvin College. Those acquainted with Dr. Spykman's work have come to expect a high standard from him, and his study guide does not disappoint the reader. It is a very worthy companion to *Promise and Deliverance* and will serve to make this book a very attractive option for societies and study groups in the church. There certainly is

enough material here to keep you going for at least one full season, more likely two! Spykman has closely followed the book, and his guide contains some 60 chapters, each of which consists of anywhere from 5 to 14 questions. Each question is really a bit more than that though: it is really a little cluster of questions which gets at an important point or concept in the book. Careful reading is required, but will yield great reward in terms of insight and understanding.

Quite often the complaint is heard: where can we go for good and reliable study materials for our Young People Societies? our Grow Groups? our Household of Faith groups? There is a lot of material on the market, but it is hard to make a choice and sometimes even harder to be

happy with the choice that is finally made. Paideia Press has done the Christian community a great service by engaging the services of Dr. Spykman, for here is material that can be recommended without qualification, and which can be a great blessing in opening our ears and hearts again to a right hearing of

God's Word.

I am convinced that working through the study guide will make both our younger and older people aware again of the beautiful redemptive-historical, Christo-centric character of the Old Testament, and will illustrate in a living way the rich heritage they have as children of the Re-

formation.

The study guide is published in an attractive format and has the same cover design as the book itself. If you are looking for something worthwhile for your group, or if you are dissatisfied with your present material, this study guide will be the best news in years!

What is happening in Reformed Missions

The World Survey of Reformed Missions, Third Edition, 1977, The Reformed Ecumenical Synod, 1677 Gentian Dr., Southeast, Grand Rapids, Mich., U.S.A. 49508, pp. 163; price \$2.00. This book is available at Speelman's in Toronto.

Rev. J.D. Tangelder

This excellent survey of

Reformed Missions contains reports on 33 countries where the R.E.S. member churches are engaged in spreading the Gospel. The report includes not only overseas mission work, but also evangelism projects at home. "Missions is (or should be) by all churches to all continents. In no age was a global perspective more urgent than today and in very

many places there is still an open door." (p. 1)

The reports are sketchy but informative. They give good overviews of trials, obstacles, progress and blessings experienced.

Mission committees, church and Christian school libraries should obtain copies of the survey for reference.

The ways and means of "getting" saved

How to be born again by Billy Graham, published by Word Books, Waco, Texas

Reviewed by Gerry Denbok

When publishers decide on the size of the first print-run for a certain book, they must express their faith in the potential of this book. Word Incorporated, Billy Graham's new publisher (it used to be Doubleday) expressed this faith when they decided on the largest first print-run ever in cloth binding (for a non-fiction book): 800,000 copies. This of course does not indicate quality, and time will tell whether Word was correct or not.

As the title indicates, this is another "How to" book: to become what one is not yet. A book to give the directions to be followed. It is intended for those who know that they are not yet born-again, and for those who want to instruct others in this "how to".

The basic approach of the book is sound, in that it follows the basic three steps of scripture as expressed in our Heidelberg: "Misery, Redemption, Thankfulness". Billy Graham calls these: "Man's problem, God's Answer, and Man's Response". And in speaking about "regeneration or rebirth" Dr. Graham avoids a narrow view also: (page 10) "This new birth may happen in all kinds of ways, it may seem to happen over a period of time, or in a moment". He also avoids the perfectionist error, when he states: (page 23) "But the peace of God is not the absence of tension or turmoil, but peace in the midst of tension and turmoil..." He rejects the quest of Dr. Rookmaker: (page 23) "Man today wants to experience God. It is not faith of knowledge which is the keyword, but experience".

Graham also warns for neo-orthodoxy which is secretly

introduced everywhere, even using the classical Christian terminology, such as "born again", "messiah", "christ", "redemption", and admits that even theological terms, such as "evangelical" and "Infallible Bible" are rapidly losing their former meaning (page 61). And he does not confuse "sincerity" with "faith" (page 62): "nothing could be more grossly wrong than the old cliché that 'any religion will do, as long as you are sincere'."

Worthwhile is also the very short, but to the point reading of, what he calls the "X-rays", the Ten Commandments (p. 73-75). I found chapter seven the best of the book. ("The Man who is God"). In this chapter Graham shows that the "Attributes of God" also belong to our Lord Jesus. Jesus was and is the supreme manifestation of God. God is Holy, Just, Merciful, Loving, Omnipotent, Omniscient, Omnipresent. On page 119 he explains the difference between "pardon" and "justification" with a good illustration. And he does not give ground to pentecostal and charismatic claims when he clearly states on page 173: "when you were converted the Spirit of God immediately came to live in you".

This book liberally quotes from many authors, and hopefully will encourage readers of this book to read for themselves some of these authors: Rookmaker, Guinness, Lewis, Schaeffer and Packer.

Nevertheless, this book is not Reformed. It is no accident that Graham repeats (the obvious truth!) which has been stated by many other non-reformed Evangelicals before him: "The new birth is not just being reformed, it's being transformed". The Book is basically Arminian in its approach, even though Graham, who stands with one foot in

Baptist, and with the other in Presbyterian tradition tries to avoid identification. He speaks of a "point of decision" (page 10), and "At the end of the service she was born again" (page 25). He says: "I am convinced that when a man sincerely searches for God with all his heart, God will reveal Himself in some way".

In one place in the book, the little word "almost" jumps at the Reformed reader where it states that "If we had to repent without God's Help, then we would be almost helpless". Or elsewhere he

says: "I open the door of my heart to Him" and again further on: "And finally it is your decision". He also contradicts the Reformed (scriptural) view of infant baptism: "When you were converted, God adopted you as His son or daughter".

I recommend this book to the discerning reader, who is able to sift the chaff from the wheat. There is certainly a need for a book like this, that is readable for those who are totally unfamiliar with the teacher and vocabulary of God's Word, but without the faults mentioned above.

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